

THE WATCH AND OTHER HEROES
By Lorraine Viade, Psy.D.



So the other night, there I was, looking for something mindless to watch and I happened upon the Green Lantern, yet another superhero in the pantheon of larger-than-life beings that help preserve the human will.

Heroes must face their fears, battle their own inner fears and doubts. I contemplated the significance of all of this “saving the world” and it occurred to me that, no matter if it is Iron Man, Superman, Batman, Green Lantern, Spiderman, Wonder Woman, the Hulk, the Avengers, the X-Men or any other hero-human, part-human or alien, they all believe that the human spirit and the human being is worth any risk to save from destruction. But to protect life on Earth as we know it, no one can do it alone.

Then, I went to the theater and saw what at first looked like just another mindless comedy called *The Watch* which is about some adolescents in men’s bodies who take on alien invaders in order to protect their neighborhoods. So, what does all of this have in common? In *The Watch*, four unlikely misfits bond when tragedy strikes the local Costco in a small Ohio town. The men become vigilant anti-heroes who commit to observe and protect their friends and families from

extraterrestrial attacks in all the preposterous and vulgar ways that make the most of the comedic timing talents of Ben Stiller, Vince Vaughn and Jonah Hill. In *The Watch*, ordinary guys become extraordinary in order to overcome the struggles in their own lives, and in saving others, they ultimately save themselves. They become better people by becoming a team and working together.

So then I got to thinking... Hey, going out and facing danger, battling evil-doers to save humanity is exactly what our social workers, psychologists, parent partners, outreach workers and every other field worker do every day when they go into dangerous neighborhoods laden with gang and domestic violence. They face danger, attacks and extreme situations with the same commitment and dedication. They watch over the helpless humans who need protection and, at the same time, they are challenged to overcome their own vulnerabilities to win those battles that we in public service fight every day.

These unsung heroes don't make the front page of the newspapers and movies don't get made about their heroic deeds. They just go on day after day, one human at a time, saving who they can, and mourning those who perish in the wake of the never-ending war against abuse and violence. These are warriors in our inner cities, in the outer counties and all across America where children are hurt by those who are supposed to love them. If Clark Kent really existed, I bet he would put their stories on page one of the Daily Planet.

Meanwhile, *The Watch* is there to remind you that even the preposterous has merit. I give it three couches.

